

Association of Societies for Growing Australian Plants
EREMOPHILA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER No. 76

May 2002

My apologies for the lateness of this issue, however, I have found it rather difficult to put this one together due to the lack of material from you the members, and I am not in a position to wax lyrical each time a Newsletter is due.

Weather conditions here in SA have been most unusual, with temperatures being well into the twenties for most of April and even into this month and there has been very little rain for the entire year. I understand that this has extended into the eastern states as well. Those who are growing their eremophilas with the use of water from dams etc. are finding the going very tough and from the few I have heard from or visited in the past few months, their eremophilas are feeling the strain, with many succumbing to the dry and the continued hot weather.

A special thankyou to Colin Theakstone for once again coming to my rescue with an article and a fine set of drawings, this time of *Eremophila duttonii* seen in Mutawintji National Park in the western region of New South Wales during a trip which he and his wife Merelyn made in May 2001.

Deadline for the next issue will be July 31st. Please try to get something to me for inclusion.

Subscription for the coming year will fall due at the end of June, and those who are due for another payment will find a red sticker in the top right hand corner of this Newsletter.

Due to the costs involved in sending out each Newsletter it has been decided that the subscription rate for next year will be \$5.

Those who have already paid their subscriptions in advance will retain their subscription at the old rate and for the time already prepaid, this will save a lot of bookwork and rearranging of existing record.

REGISTERING NATIVE CULTIVARS WITH ACRA

The ASGAP Biennial Conference AGM in Canberra, September 2001 decided that Study group Leaders should inform their group members of the close association our society has with the Australian Cultivar Registration Authority (ACRA). ASGAP is in fact the major financial supporter of ACRA, in return for which ACRA provides FREE registration of all native cultivars for members of our society (normally \$50). These need to be registered through either a local or state group or through a Study Group.

However it must be pointed out that the \$50 pays for the Registrar of ACRA to write a full description of the new cultivar, listing EXACTLY how it differs from any similar species or other cultivars.

Therefore any free registrations through ASGAP MUST be accompanied by a full description by the applicant. If the applicant is not in a position to carry out this description, he/she should seek the assistance of the leader of the appropriate Study Group or one of its members.

Unfortunately ACRA is seriously under-funded, and can no longer accept free registrations from ASGAP members without the full plant description. Therefore, any member who wishes to register a new plant should contact the appropriate Study Group Leader or Neil Marriott, Box 107, Stawell, Victoria, 3380, who represents ASGAP on the ACRA board. (Neil is a member of the Eremophila Study Group. Ed.)

EREMOPHILAS FOR THE GARDEN

There are still a number of copies of this publication available to members of the Study Group at a cost of \$8.50, postage paid. I also have copies of the edited booklet of newsletters to #31 at \$8.75 postage paid. Copies of all past Newsletters are still available at a cost of 50cents each. postage paid. All enquiries to be directed to Colin Jennings

FROM YOUR LETTERS

Barbara Hannah - Armidale, NSW

Barbara is a new member who wrote these notes in her letter seeking membership of the Study Group.

"Eremophilas have been one of our success stories - which seems surprising given our conditions: over 1000m, severe (over -8°C) frosts and summer maximum rainfall/winter 'drought'. Some shelter provided by trees may be a factor.)

Our first planting was well over ten years ago (of a genus about which we knew very little - but we were charmed by the name 'spotted emu bush') and that shrub has survived all sorts of trauma and continues to thrive and persists with months-long flowering (although we haven't managed to germinate seed.) We now have dozens of specimens of a number of species and plan more."

Barbara added in a subsequent letter:

"Our eremophilas look wonderful - but we are going to have fun sorting out what some of them actually are, as they were incorrectly labelled when bought. There is always plenty of physical and mental work with gardening."

EREMOPHILA DUTTONII

Whilst bird watching in Mutawintji National Park (about 150km Northeast of Broken Hill, NSW) we noticed what seemed to be a large Hop Bush (*Dodonea* Sp.) carrying a heavy crop of seed.

Not so. It turned out to be a large *E. duttonii* plant and we were struck by:

- 1) The large flower, red shading to green. Very much like *Correa schlechtendalii*.
- 2) The fact that the calyx grows larger after flower drop, then turns to a dry paper-like texture.
- 3) The large number of these dry seeds and calyces retained.
- 4) The almost total carpet of dead flowers, seeds and calyces under the bush.
- 5) The non-symmetrical development of the flower bud - one sepal develops, then the next one etc. etc., and finally the flower.

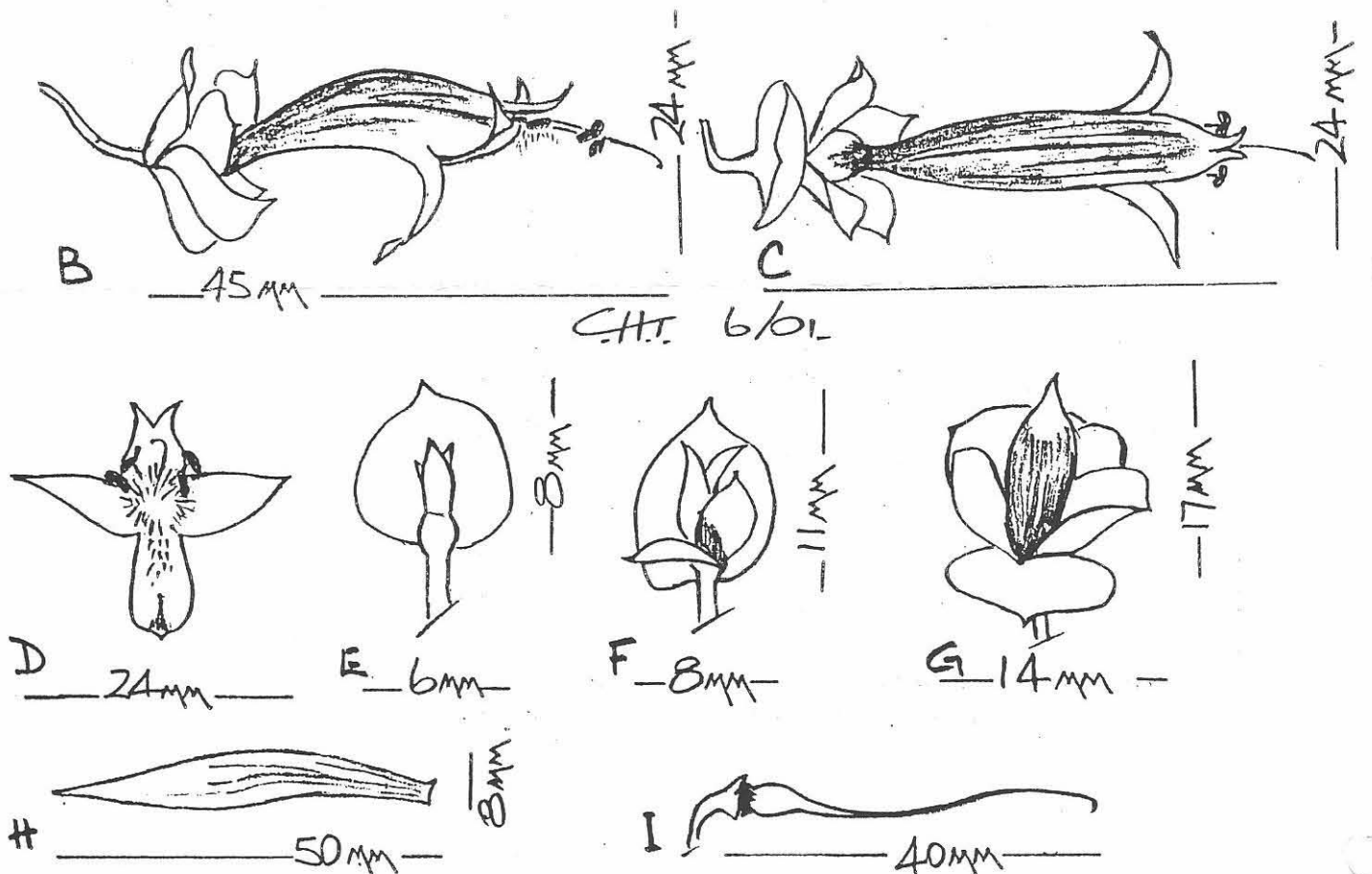
Colin & Merelyn Theakstone
Seacliff Park, SA

(This species has been recognised as a very desirable one to cultivate, however, it has resisted many attempts to propagate it from cuttings, regardless of the time of year that the cuttings are taken or the conditions under which the attempt to strike them has been made. It has been found that grafting of young tip growths onto *Myoporum insulare* and *M. montanum* stock has a good success rate and there have been a few grafted plants available in the past year or so. There are also some interesting colour variants of the species, so it would be desirable to collect the better forms. Ed.)

Eremophila duttonii F. Muell.

(Named after Francis S. Dutton, 19th Century explorer and Premier of South Australia.)





A, habit - note large dry calyx/seed, lower left. B,C&D, corolla - side, top and front view. E,F&G, calyx showing progressive development of sepals and flower. H, leaf. I, gynoecium - sepals removed.

ASGAP Eremophila Study Group Leader
Colin Jennings, 4 Kinnaird Crescent, Highbury, South Australia, 5089
email address: colmyr@senet.com.au

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